



MEMORANDUM

CITY OF WATERTOWN PLANNING OFFICE

245 WASHINGTON STREET, ROOM 304, WATERTOWN, NY 13601

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TO: Planning Board Members

FROM: Kenneth A. Mix, Planning and Community Development Coordinator

SUBJECT: Site Plan Approval – Parking Lot, Woolworth Building

DATE: July 30, 2013

Request: Site Plan Approval for the construction of a 28-space parking lot to serve a 50-unit multi-family residential renovation project at 29-41 Public Square, parcels 7-01-116, 7-01-114, 7-01-113, and 7-01-112.001

Applicant: White Birch Enterprises

Proposed Use: Parking lot

Property Owner: City of Watertown

Submitted:

Property Survey: Yes	Preliminary Architectural Drawings: No
Site Plan: Yes	Preliminary Site Engineering Plans: Yes
Vehicle and Pedestrian Circulation Plan: Yes	Construction Time Schedule: Yes
Landscaping and Grading Plan: Yes	Description of Uses, Hours & Traffic Volume: Yes

SEQRA: Unlisted

County Review: Yes, July 30th

Zoning Information:

District: Commercial	Maximum Lot Coverage: N/A
Setback Requirements: F: 20', S: 5', R: 25'	Buffer Zone Required: 5-15' northeast corner

Project Overview: The applicant proposes to construct 28 parking spaces on a vacant lot near the J. B. Wise municipal lot. 25 of these spaces would be behind a gate, but the whole lot is meant for the exclusive use of future Woolworth Building tenants.

Parking: No parking is required by code for the Woolworth Building, this lot is being constructed voluntarily as an amenity. However, since parking is provided, Code requires that an accessible space be provided. The path between the proposed lot and the building entrance is not direct and exceeds the maximum allowable slope. The applicant has proposed locating an accessible space behind the building on a sliver of land between the Paddock Arcade and the bus transfer station.

After investigating the deeds for the Woolworth Building, the City Bus Transfer Station, and the Paddock Arcade, it appears that all three of these properties share the right to use in common the area between the Transfer Station and a line 6' from the Paddock Arcade north wall. This means that the handicap space cannot be established here, as it would be for the exclusive use of one property. The applicant must solve the deed issue or relocate the parking space.

The applicant must add a label to C101 noting the removal of the existing curb and a transition to the existing curb to remain. A detail of the curb transition must be added.

Sidewalks: The applicant provides a walkway and stairs near the southwest corner of the lot, providing access from Public Square.

Lighting: Three light poles are proposed, and have been specified to match the existing fixtures in J. B. Wise and on Public Square. As proposed, a light pole will be located approximately 1 foot from the retaining wall on the south end of the lot. At this location, the wall is 8 feet tall and the luminaire would be 16 feet from the ground. This puts the luminaire less than 8 feet above the nearby sidewalk grade. Staff recommends that this fixture be removed from the plan. If the applicant requires greater illumination, a wall-pack or scone type light should be attached directly to the retaining wall.

Drainage & Grading: A substantial amount of material will be cut from the site to match the grade with J. B. Wise. An 8 to 10 foot retaining wall will be constructed along the southern side of the lot. Drainage will run from southwest to northeast, and will be collected by two catch basins, connected to the J. B. Wise system. The applicant must provide pre- and post-construction stormwater calculations and drainage area maps.

Sewer: A sewer line runs across the northeast corner of the property. The proposed grading would reduce the line's cover, and the proximity of the retaining wall would put the pipe within 2 horizontal feet of air, exposing it to frost action. The applicant must dig test holes to determine the sewer pipe's cover. The applicant shall shift the retaining wall to provide 5 feet of clear distance to the sewer pipe.

Landscaping: Trees and planting beds are proposed along the Public Square frontage. Trees will also be planted along the northern and eastern edges of the lot. In total, 12 trees of four different species are proposed. One 4" crabapple will be removed.

Miscellaneous: The applicant must show the proposed subdivision of 29 Public Square (the Cam's building), and label both subdivision lines with "Proposed Subdivision by City of Watertown".

The applicant must obtain the following permits prior to construction: Sewer Permit, General City Permit for work in the right-of-way or on City property, and a Building Permit for the associated residential renovation.

Summary:

1. The applicant shall relocate the handicap parking space and provide an accessible route subject to approval by the City Engineer.
2. The applicant shall add a label to C101 noting the removal of the existing curb and a transition to the existing curb to remain.
3. The applicant shall provide a detail of the curb transition.

4. The applicant shall remove the southernmost light pole from the plan. Any lights installed along the high portion of the retaining wall should be wall packs or sconces mounted directly to the wall.
5. The applicant shall provide pre- and post-development drainage calculation and drainage area maps.
6. The applicant shall shift the retaining wall to provide 5 feet clear distance to the sanitary sewer line. Test holes shall be performed on the sewer line to confirm adequate depth.
7. The applicant shall depict the proposed subdivisions of 29 and 41 Public Square on the site plan, and label them with "Proposed Subdivision by City of Watertown."

cc: City Council Members
Robert J. Slye, City Attorney
Justin Wood, Civil Engineer II
Ryan Churchill, 220 Sterling St